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Proof of Bible Inspiration: The Passover

Dave Miller, Ph.D.

Fifteen hundred years before Jesus Christ came to the planet, on a dark and fateful night in Egypt, oppressed Jews were given curious instructions from God via their leader, Moses:

Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, “This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: ‘On the tenth day of this month every man shall **take for himself a lamb**, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household. And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man’s need you shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. And they shall **take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it**. Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter

herbs they shall eat it.... And thus you shall eat it: with a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. **It is the LORD’s Passover.** For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And **when I see the blood, I will pass over you**; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt. So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD throughout your generations” (Exodus 12:1-14).

The average Jew no doubt connected the symbolic significance of being fully clothed for travel with their imminent hasty exodus from the land. The smearing of animal blood on their doorposts might have seemed odd, but it was specifically explained as the means by which God would “pass over” them when executing the plague against the firstborn of Egypt:

And it shall be, when your children say to you, “What do you mean by this service?” that you shall say, “It is the Passover sacrifice of the LORD, who **passed**

over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and delivered our households” (Exodus 12:26-27).

However, two additional directives were given, one of which must have raised eyebrows:

In one house it shall be eaten; you shall not carry any of the flesh outside the house, nor shall you **break one of its bones** (Exodus 12:46).

Later generations of Israelites would have understood the significance of remaining in their homes while eating—since the blood on their doors kept their firstborn from being slain:

[N]one of you shall go out of the door of his house until morning. For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and **not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike you** (Exodus 12:22-23).

But the second directive pertaining to the breaking of the bones of the lamb must have perplexed even that first generation of Israelites. The stipulation was repeated to the Israelites after their departure from Egypt:

On the fourteenth day of the second month, at twilight, they may keep it. They shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. They shall leave none of it until morning, **nor break one of its bones**. According to all the ordinances of the Passover they shall keep it (Numbers 9:11-12).

Successive generations of Jews, no doubt, would have been very careful in butchering, carving, and eating the Passover lamb to avoid breaking bones. But why? Undoubtedly, Israelite children would have asked their parents, “Why does God not want us to break any of the lamb’s bones?” The parents would have had no definitive answer—since

God had not explained Himself. No clue was given to the Jews through the centuries that might explain the significance of refraining from breaking the bones of the Passover lamb.

Over five centuries later, King David wrote an inspired psalm in which he expressed his gratitude for the protection and care of God in dealing with his enemies.¹ In that Psalm, David extols the goodness of God in providing him with protection from his enemies—even to the point of preserving the bones of his body from being broken by those who wished him bodily harm:

Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivers him out of them all. He guards all his bones; **not one of them is broken**. Evil shall slay the wicked, and those who hate the righteous shall be condemned. The LORD redeems the soul of His servants, and none of those who trust in Him shall be condemned (Psalm 34:19-22).

No Jew in David's day would have had any reason to extract more meaning from the psalm than that which appears at face value, i.e., God cares for His people (in this case, David) and guards them amid the onslaught of the wicked.

Over 1,000 years later, Jesus assumed bodily form on Earth (Hebrews 10:5). At the end of His 33 years, He was taken by the Romans at the behest of the Jews and crucified in keeping with Roman execution protocol. Here is John's inspired report of the final details:

Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), **the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken**, and that they might be taken away. Then the soldiers

came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him. But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe. For these things were done **that the Scripture should be fulfilled, "Not one of His bones shall be broken"** (John 19:31-36).²

Why did the Jews request that Jesus' legs be broken? Archaeologist Vassilios Tzaferis³ explains:

Normally, the Romans left the crucified person undisturbed to die slowly of sheer physical exhaustion leading to asphyxia. However, Jewish tradition required burial on the day of execution. Therefore, in Palestine the executioner would break the legs of the crucified person in order to hasten his death and thus permit burial before nightfall. This practice, described in the Gospels in reference to the two thieves who were crucified with

Jesus (John 19:18), has now been archaeologically confirmed. Since the victim we excavated was a Jew, we may conclude that the executioners broke his legs on purpose in order to accelerate his death and allow his family to bury him before nightfall in accordance with Jewish custom.⁴

This explanation squares with the biblical text: the reason given for the Jews' request was their concern that the body of Jesus not remain on the cross once the Sabbath ensued. So the breaking of the leg bones of a crucifixion victim was directly connected to the hastening of the victim's death. Further, the inspired writer juxtapositions the criminals' status with Jesus' status on the point of whether they were still alive. The soldiers broke the legs of the criminals, but the reason given for not breaking Jesus' legs was that they "saw that He was already dead" (vs. 33).

Observe that both David's words in Psalm 34 as well as John's late first century quotation of those words in John 19 constitute ambiguous prophecies. Granted, John connected the Davidic messianic prophecy with the condition

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of Christ on the cross. But more than likely, neither he, nor David, nor any other Jew from 1,500 B.C. to A.D. 30 was able to fathom any further significance and “put it all together.” It was not until the apostle Paul wrote his letter to the church of Christ at Corinth (Cir. A.D. 55-57) that the wonder of Bible inspiration on this point achieved clarity.

In a context in which Paul urged the congregation to take public action against an immoral member, he added a remark that had relevance to their predicament, but which had a marvelous, broader significance for all Christians for all time: “For indeed Christ, **our Passover**, was sacrificed for us” (1 Corinthians 5:7). Just as Jesus predicted, the Passover found its fulfillment in the kingdom of God (Luke 22:16).⁵ After more than a millennium and a half of obscurity and virtual silence, suddenly the mysterious Mosaic prohibition was solved. The rationale for refraining from breaking any of the bones of the Passover lamb under the Law of Moses was that one day in the distant future, the Lord of Heaven and Earth would assume human form and take upon Himself the sins of the world by being executed on a Roman cross. And as that unjust sentence was being carried out, when Roman soldiers would ordinarily bring their sadistic torture to the culmination and climax of death by breaking the leg bones of the victim, they found that “He was already dead.” This incredible bit of minutia—this miniscule detail that went virtually unnoticed by those gathered on that occasion outside Jerusalem at the far flung outer extremities of the mighty Roman Empire—was of monumental significance and earth-shaking import. How could Moses or David have known that

centuries far beyond their own day, unknown, unnamed Roman soldiers in first century A.D. Palestine would refrain from breaking the bones of the Messiah because “he was already dead”? They could **not** have known—not without supernatural assistance.

Three incredible details—the bones of the Passover Lamb of Mosaic religion were not to be broken, Jesus’ bones were not broken by the Romans, and His sacrifice on the cross enabling Him to be our Passover—intertwined to bring to fruition marvelous meaning from the mind of God for all mankind. In revealing the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit had in mind the coming of Christ and anticipated minute details about Him that neither the Old Testament prophets nor the New Testament apostles grasped:

Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into (1 Peter 1:10-12).

Four human writers, each engaging his own mind to report inspired minutia, were nevertheless overseen by a single divine Mind (2 Peter 1:21). The Holy Spirit did just what Jesus said He would do: teach and explain things to them they could not grasp at the time (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:12-13). Indeed, who could have ever sorted out these profound mysteries? No

mere human. What Moses wrote (Exodus 12:43-46; Numbers 9:11-12), followed by what David wrote (Psalm 34:19-20), supplemented by what John reported (John 19:31-36), and brought to climactic fulfillment with what Paul wrote (1 Corinthians 5:7), could only have been orchestrated by the infinite, eternal mind of Deity Who transcends time and place.

“Who has declared this from ancient time?

Who has told it from that time?

Have not I, the LORD?

And there is no other God besides Me,

A just God and a Savior;

There is none besides me” (Isaiah 45:21).

ENDNOTES

¹ Scholars and commentators on the Psalms uniformly identify as the historical context of Psalm 34 the incident in 1 Samuel 21 in which David, in his efforts to elude Saul’s retribution, took refuge among the Philistines. See, for example, the classic treatments of the Psalms by Joseph Alexander (1873), *The Psalms Translated and Explained* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1975 reprint), p. 145; H.C. Leupold (1969 reprint), *Exposition of the Psalms* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker), p. 278; F. Delitzsch (1976 reprint), *Psalms* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans), pp. 407ff.; Albert Barnes (1847), *Notes on the Old Testament: Psalms* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2005 reprint), p. 287ff.

² Another Messianic psalm depicts the Messiah as being in such a depleted, emaciated, if not stretched, condition that His bones were “out of joint” and that He could count His bones (Psalm 22:14,17).

³ Prominent Greek archaeologist who excavated numerous sites within Israel including Ashkelon, Beth Shean, Capernaum, Kursi, Tel Dan, and in Jerusalem. He was a member of the Supreme Archaeological Council in Israel and served as the Director of Excavations and Surveys at the Israel Antiquities Authority from 1991 to 2001.

⁴ Taken from his article which reports his excavation of Second Temple tombs in Jerusalem, one of which contained the remains of a crucified man in his 20s: Vassilios Tzaferis (1985), “Crucifixion—The Archaeological Evidence,” *Biblical Archaeology Review*, January/February, 44-53, <https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/biblical-topics/crucifixion/a-tomb-in-jerusalem-reveals->

the-history-of-crucifixion-and-roman-crucifixion-methods/#end04. See also Alok Jha (2004), “How Did Crucifixion Kill?” *The Guardian*, April 8, <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2004/apr/08/thisweekssciencequestions>; Kristina Killgrove (2015), “This Bone Is The Only Skeletal Evidence For Crucifixion In The Ancient World,” *Forbes*, December 8, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/kristinakillgrove/2015/12/08/this-bone-provides-the-only-skeletal-evidence-for-crucifixion-in-the-ancient-world/>; Biblical Archaeology Society Staff (2011), “A Tomb in Jerusalem Reveals the History of Crucifixion and Roman Crucifixion Methods,” *Bible History Daily*, July 22, <https://www.biblicalarchaeology.org/daily/biblical-topics/crucifixion/a-tomb-in-jerusalem-reveals-the-history-of-crucifixion-and-roman-crucifixion-methods/>; Erkki Koskeniemi, Kirsi Nisula, and Jorma Toppari (2005), “Wine Mixed with Myrrh (Mark 15:23) and Crurifragium (John 19:31-32): Two Details of the Passion Narratives,” *Journal for the Study of the New Testament*, 27[4]:379-391.

- ⁵ Observe that Jesus was not referring to the Lord’s Supper in Luke 22:16—as He did in Matthew’s (26:29) and Mark’s (14:25) accounts where “fulfill” is not used—but to the Passover. The Passover, as originally instituted by God, had as its initial and partial meaning the recollection of the Israelites being shielded from the destroyer in Egypt (Exodus 12:23). But its ultimate and complete significance lay in the achievement of Christ on the cross. The aorist passive subjunctive verb that Luke used to report Jesus’ comments (*pleirothei*) means “to make full, complete, perfect,” “to consummate” (as in Matthew 5:17), and “to realize, accomplish” (as in Luke 1:20; 9:31; Acts 3:18). Perschbacher notes: “from the Hebrew, *to set forth fully*” and in the passive of time “to be fully arrived” [Wesley Perschbacher (1990), *The New Analytical Greek Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson), p. 332.] The Complete Jewish Bible (CJB) captures accurately the import: “For I tell you, it is certain that I will not celebrate it again until it is **given its full meaning** in the Kingdom of God.” Likewise the New Century Version (NCV): “I will not eat another Passover meal until it is **given its true meaning** in the kingdom of God.” The full and true meaning of the Mosaic Passover is only seen in Jesus’ sacrifice for sin.



IN several places in Scripture, men of giant stature are mentioned¹—men like Goliath, who was “six cubits and a span,” or about nine feet, nine inches tall (1 Samuel 17:4). Are such accounts mere tales worth scoffing at, or is there evidence that humans can grow, and have grown, to **enormous** heights?

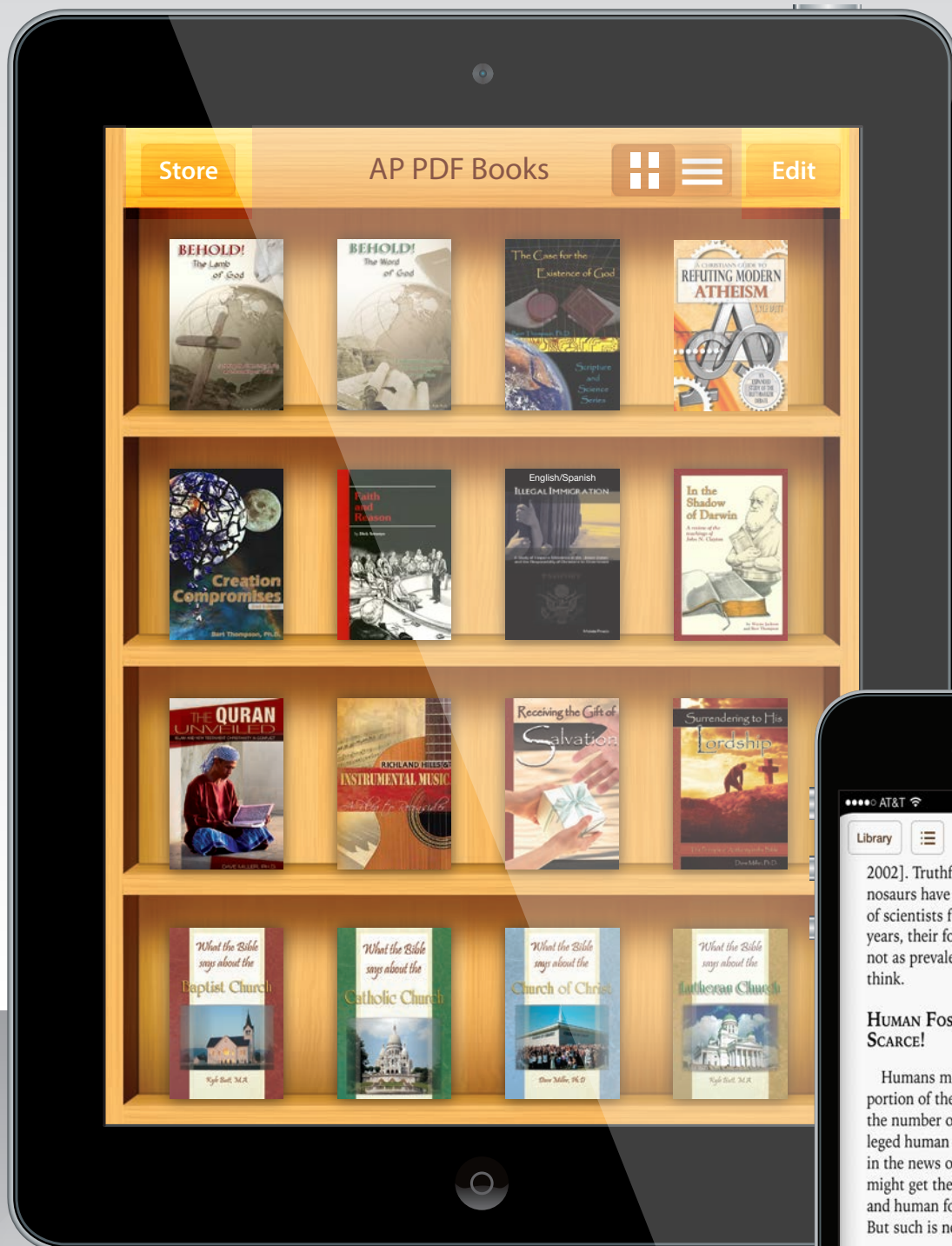
According to evolutionists, giants are not a mythical idea. In a science podcast broadcasted by Cambridge University, well-known paleoanthropologist of the University of Witwatersrand, Lee Berger, was interviewed. Berger discovered the *australopithecus sediba*² and *homo naledi*³ fossils. The podcast group had an opportunity to visit the fossil collection at the University where Berger is a professor for a podcast. While there, they discussed the fossils of the museum. In the article following the interview, editor Chris Smith said, “One of the most interesting things that the fossil record reveals is that we went through a period of extreme giantism. These were people routinely over 7ft tall, they were huge.”⁴ Berger said, “You’ve probably heard the myth that ancient humans were tiny and some of them were tiny. But, as we moved through the period of

0.5 million to 300,000 years ago in Africa..., [t]hey go through a period of giantism.”⁵ Berger then proceeded to show the group an example of one of the giant femurs from a species dubbed *homo heidelbergensis*.⁶ Berger said, “They are huge. That’s so big we can’t even calculate how big this individual was.”⁷ Berger admitted that he cannot even gage the actual size of the individual and so **surmises** him to be over seven feet tall. Smith responded to Berger, asking him if the extreme size could just be an abnormality—an exception to the rule. Berger responded, saying, “No, because we found a lot of them. Everywhere we find them we find them enormous. These are what we call archaic *homo sapiens*. Some people refer to them as *homo heidelbergensis*. These individuals are extraordinary. **They are giants.**”⁸ Notice first that Berger acknowledges that *homo heidelbergensis* is definitely human (i.e., *homo sapiens*), just ancient and **enormous**. Second, notice that, according to Berger, the fossils are not abnormalities. There was a group of these large humans.

In case *homo heidelbergensis* is not sufficient evidence, Ralph von Koenigswald of the Netherlands Indies Geological Survey discov-

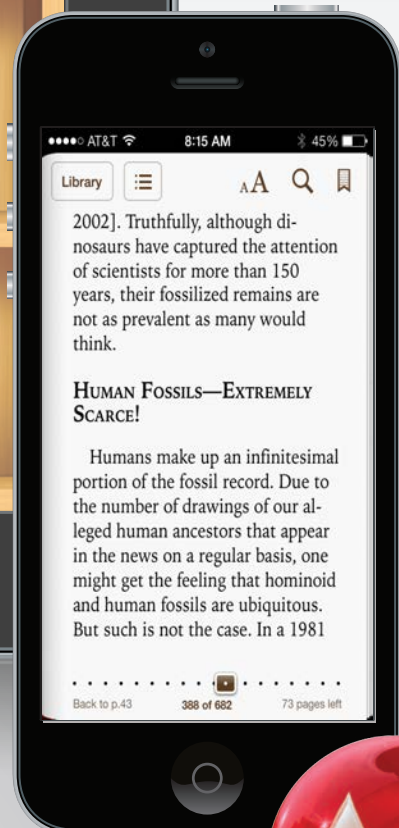
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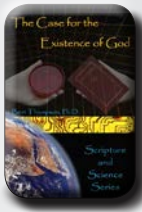
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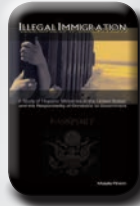
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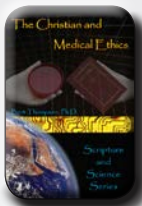
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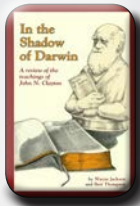
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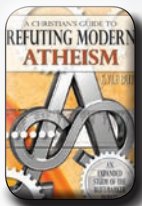
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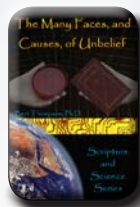
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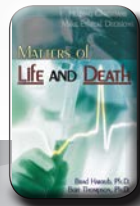
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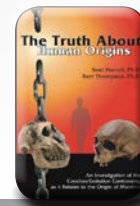
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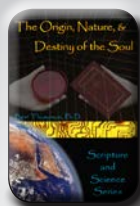
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THE TRUTH ABOUT HUMAN ORIGINS



FAITH & REASON



THE ORIGIN, NATURE, & DESTINY OF THE SOUL



WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT...



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THE CATHOLIC CHURCH



THE CHURCH OF CHRIST



THE LUTHERAN CHURCH



THE GLOBAL FLOOD



THE QURAN UNVEILED

ered enormous jawbones in 1944. Announcing the discovery, *Time* magazine ran an article titled “Giants in Those Days,” quoting from Genesis 6:4. According to the article,

Koenigswald first found a big jawbone which looked [human]...but was so massive that he thought it could not possibly be a man’s. Then he found a still larger jaw, the biggest ever discovered, which was unmistakably human.... Koenigswald named it *Meganthropus paleojavanicus*.... Koenigswald’s crowning find dwarfed even *Meganthropus*.... [H]e found three astounding teeth. They were six times as big as a modern man’s molars.... Weidenreich [of the American Museum of Natural History] is sure, from the pattern of their “biting surfaces, that they are definitely human.” He has named this man monster...*Gigantanthropus*. The...giants, Weidenreich thinks, were not freaks. Taking a fresh look at the thick-boned fossils of such other primitive human beings as Heidelberg Man, Weidenreich now believes that “gigantism and massiveness may have been a general or at least widespread character of early mankind.”⁹

So once again, we have evidence of enormous humans, and not merely “freaks,” but potentially a widespread characteristic of humanity. Humans are definitely capable of enormous size.¹⁰

Even today, thousands of years beyond the optimal period of human health and life longevity that characterized the pre-Flood world, humans are capable of immense size. According to Guinness World Records, the tallest man alive today is Sultan Kosen who is eight feet three inches tall.¹¹ His immense height seems to have been caused by a pituitary condi-

tion which resulted in an overproduction of growth hormone, providing scientific evidence of those genetic characteristics that can contribute to great size. Kosen, however, was short compared to the tallest man from the past who was officially measured: Robert Wadlow—eight feet eleven inches tall, just one inch shy of nine feet tall!¹² He weighed in at 491 pounds at one point in his life.

Even evolutionists concede that humans are capable of, and have grown to, immense heights. The giants of the Bible were not mythical beings, but real humans—albeit, **big** ones.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ E.g., 1 Samuel 17:4-7; 21:19-22; *Nephilim*: Genesis 6:4; Numbers 13:32-33; *Rephaim*: Deuteronomy 2:10-11,20; Deuteronomy 3:11,13; Joshua 12:4; 13:12; 17:15; 2 Samuel 21:16,18,20,22.
- ² Jeff Miller (2015), “In the News: *Sediba*: Yet Another Paleo-Blunder,” *Reason & Revelation*, 35[6]:66.
- ³ Jeff Miller (2015), “*Homo Naledi*—Kind of Shady?” *Reason & Revelation*,

35[11]:129-131.

⁴ Chris Smith (2007), “Our Story: Human Ancestor Fossils,” *The Naked Scientists*, University of Cambridge, November 25.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Jeff Miller (2011), “Heidelberg Man: The Evolutionist’s Jawbone of Life,” *Apologetics Press*, <http://www.apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?article=305>.

⁷ Smith.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ “Giants in Those Days” (1944), *Time*, Science, July 3.

¹⁰ It is possible (even likely) that humans, like plants, reptiles, and insects, were, in fact, larger in the pre-Flood era and for some time afterwards due to the optimized nature of the pre-Flood world. *Homo heidelbergensis* may be representative of many humans post-Flood. However, when the geologic column and fossil record are telescoped to the biblical timeframe, we realize that most *homo* species are actually just variety within the human kind, living at roughly the same time with each other. Many of the fossils of larger humans that are being discovered, therefore, are possibly representative of a “race” within the human kind, rather than a species representative of all humans over a long period of time.

¹¹ “Tallest Man Ever” (2018), *Guinness World Records* On-line, <http://www.guinnessworldrecords.com/world-records/tallest-man-ever>.

¹² Ibid.

How Long Were Adam and Eve in the Garden Before Sinning?

Jeff Miller, Ph.D.

IF one wishes to harmonize an old Earth and/or theistic evolution with the Bible, among many other obstacles,¹ he must find a place in the text in which to squeeze 4.5 billion years of alleged Earth history

and nearly 14 billion years of Universe history. The language of Genesis one does not allow the necessary time prior to or during Creation week.² Is it possible to find time **after** the Creation week—prior to

Adam and Eve's eviction from the Garden of Eden—as some have suggested?³ Does the Bible allow such an infusion of time in Genesis 3? Can we even know?

The argument is that millions of years could have elapsed in the Garden prior to the first sin, during which evolution and deep time occurred. Ages, presumably, were not being counted until the first sin. Several problems immediately surface upon considering such an assumption.

1. Genesis 1:14-15 indicates that the purpose of the stars as created during the Creation week was “to give light on the Earth,” “to divide the day from the night,” and to allow the only creatures who do so to reckon “signs and seasons... days and years.” Clearly, time, and specifically years, were being counted from the beginning. “So **all the days** that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years; and he died” (Genesis 5:5). However many years Adam and Eve were in the Garden, we know it was not more than 930.
2. How likely is it that humans would be able to resist temptation for one year, much less 930 years, much less 4,500,000,000 years? After all, Satan was already present “from the beginning” (John 8:44) trying to manipulate Adam and Eve to disobey God, and unlike today, even doing so in a direct, visible way—making verbal arguments to tempt Adam and Eve.
3. Genesis 3 recounts the first sin and the eviction of Adam and Eve from Paradise. God subse-

quently placed cherubim and a flaming sword in the path of any who would attempt to re-enter the Garden and eat from the Tree. The text proceeds to relate the events that followed their eviction. “Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain.... Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel” (4:1-2). Abel, of course, was ultimately murdered by Cain some time later. The implication by those seeking to squeeze in time after Creation, then, is that Adam and Eve were in the Garden for millions of years prior to even conceiving Cain and Abel. Jesus, however, stated that the blood of Abel was shed at the “foundation of the world”—not millions or billions of years later. Note that the evolutionary model argues that humans (the genus *homo*) arrived on the scene two to three million years ago—at least 13,798,000,000 years **after** the Universe began, and at the very **end** of recorded time, not at the **foundation** of the world.

4. Further, Genesis 5:3 indicates that Adam was 130 when Seth, who was born after Cain and Abel, was born. Adam and Eve could not have, therefore, been in the Garden for even 130 years.
5. Jesus called the devil “a murderer from the beginning,” the “father” of lies (John 8:44)—a clear allusion to his actions in the Garden which led to the death of Adam, Eve, and every human since. Adam and Eve’s “murder” was considered by

Jesus to be at the “beginning,” not the end, of geologic time.

6. It is also the case that Adam and Eve had been commanded by God to “be fruitful and multiply, and fill the Earth” (Genesis 1:28). Upon marrying, Moses recounts God’s command for husband and wife: “a man shall...be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh” (2:24). If Adam and Eve had refused to do so, they would have been disobeying God and, therefore, sinning. Recall that humanity’s reluctance to “be fruitful and multiply, and fill the Earth” after the Flood (9:1) resulted in God’s actions at Babel (11:1ff.). We can, therefore, assume that Adam and Eve were obeying God, since their first sins were tied to eating from the forbidden Tree (3:6ff.), **not** from disobeying God’s command regarding procreation. Since Adam and Eve did not conceive a child until after their eviction from the Garden, it stands to reason that they were not even in the Garden long enough to do so.
7. Consider also that the desire to insert time into the biblical text is generally the result of an attempt to reconcile the Bible with contemporary geology (the geologic column) and paleontology (the fossil record). The fossil record, however, reveals that humans do not “evolve” until the late Cenozoic era—again, at the very top of the fossil record and geologic column. The 3.8 billion years of necessary time to reconcile the evolutionary timeframe of

the fossil record with Scripture, therefore, must be injected **before** humans are even on the scene, not after Adam and Eve are in the Garden. In other words, even if Adam and Eve were in the Garden for millions of years, the biblical model would still not harmonize with the contemporary model.

Bottom line: the Bible does not allow for deep time to be injected into Adam and Eve's tenure in the Garden of Eden. Immense time at that point in history would not help the Bible fit the evolutionary paradigm anyway, and there is no **need** for time to be injected. The biblical

timeframe fits the physical evidence well, as long as erroneous assumptions are not used to interpret that evidence.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Jeff Miller (2018), "Science vs. the Big Bang & Evolution: A Concise Look," Apologetics Press, <http://apologeticspress.org/APContent.aspx?article=5599>.
- ² Justin Rogers (2015), "Is the Gap Theory Linguistically Viable?" *Reason & Revelation*, 35[12]:134-141, <http://apologeticspress.org/apPubPage.aspx?pub=1&issue=1208#>; Justin Rogers (2015), "Does the Hebrew Word *Yom* Endorse an Old Earth?" *Reason & Revelation*, 35[9]:98-100, <http://apologeticspress.org/apPubPage.aspx?pub=1&issue=1202>.
- ³ John N. Clayton (1980), "Is the Age of the Earth Related to a 'Literal Interpretation' of Genesis?" *Does God Exist?* 7[1]:3-8, January.

The Goldilocks Principle: The Earth Is Designed for Us

Jeff Miller, Ph.D.

DO you recall the story of Goldilocks from your youth? She struggled as she sought the right porridge, chair, and bed, but in the end, her discoveries were "just right." The Goldilocks Principle in secular cosmology is a recognition by scientists that the Earth appears to be "just right" for life to exist on it. Leading science magazines routinely run articles updating their audiences on the hunt for other Goldilocks planets with just the right conditions for life to exist upon them as it does on Earth. The Earth appears to be designed for us.

Atheistic philosopher Paul Ricci summed up the Teleological Argument for the Existence of God well when he said, "[I]t's true that every-

thing designed has a designer.... 'Everything designed has a designer' is an analytically true statement."¹ There are an infinite number of examples of design that present themselves to us when we study the natural realm—a problem for Ricci and his atheistic colleagues, to be sure. Manuel Canales, Matthew Chwastyk, and Eve Conant wrote an article in *National Geographic* titled "One Strange Rock: 13 Things that Make Life on Earth Possible."² "Earth is well equipped as a planet and ideally placed in our solar system and galaxy to support life as we know it," they explain.³ What kinds of features make Earth so special?

- **If the Earth's rotation axis was tilted differently...:** "A

change in the rotation axis of the Earth...would be catastrophic. The number of the seasons would change and their duration. If the rotation axis became parallel to the orbital plane, as for Uranus, we could have winter in the Northern hemisphere for 6 months followed by summer. The Sun would set on the entire Northern hemisphere and not rise again for 6 months."⁴

- **If the Earth was spinning faster...:** "Hurricanes will spin faster...and there will be more energy in them."⁵ A faster rotation speed by only 10% would translate to so much water bulging around the equator, that all equatorial land would be flooded while the sea level at the poles would lower.⁶ Human and animal life would be forced to live closer to the poles, which would result in catastrophic extinctions.
- **If the Earth's orbit was closer to the Sun...:** If the average distance from the Sun was "reduced by only about three-tenths of a percent," disastrous atmospheric changes would occur, including "sea-level rise, increases in extreme weather, species extinctions and agricultural disruptions."⁷ As it makes its elliptical path around the Sun, the Earth bends from its straight course "only one ninth of an inch" every 18½ miles.⁸ "If the orbit changed by *one-tenth* of an inch every 18 miles, our orbit would be vastly larger and we would all freeze to death. One-eighth of an inch? We would all be incinerated."⁹ In fact, the Earth's perfect distance from the Sun is called the "Goldilocks zone," "where it's not too close and not too far from the sun for water to be liquid on its surface."¹⁰ Earth's

temperature is “not too hot or too cold.”¹¹

- **If the Earth had less water...:** About 75% of the entire area of the Earth is covered by water. If there was less water on the Earth, it would suffer from the drastic temperature changes seen in deserts—extremely hot during the day and extremely cold during the night. Most of the Earth does not have this problem, due in large part to the fact that the Earth has so much water on it. Water has a high specific heat capacity, which means that water can hold a lot of heat—way more than almost any other natural substance on Earth. Water can store a lot of heat or lose a lot of heat without its temperature being drastically changed, causing it to act like an air conditioning unit for the Earth, keeping its temperature relatively constant. A different liquid other than water or less water would make Earth inhospitable for life.
- **If the Earth was like other planets...:** Citing the work of University of Washington’s Peter Ward, Stanford University’s Kate Maher, NASA’s Karina Yager, and the University of Idaho’s Jason Barnes, Canales and his colleagues highlighted that Earth “recycles life-friendly carbon over time,” has an “ozone layer to block harmful rays,” “a big moon to stabilize our axial wobble,” “varied surfaces [to] support many life-forms,” and a “magnetic field” that “deflects solar tempests.” Earth is “situated safely away from gas giants”—if it were closer, their “powerful gravity could cause disastrous fluctuations in Earth’s distance from the sun.” The star of our solar system—the Sun—“is a stable, long-lasting star,” as opposed to

less massive, allegedly younger stars that are “often unstable and are prone to blasting their planets with bursts of radiation.” Earth has “the right stuff to host a dynamic core” (i.e., sufficient radioactive elements to generate a “churning core” and protective magnetic field that could, theoretically, last for billions of years). Earth has “giant planets that protect us from afar,” like Jupiter, whose size and gravity protect “Earth from overly frequent collisions that might trigger extinctions.” Zooming out further to the scale of the galaxy, we observe that “our sun offers protection from galactic debris,” “our galactic path steers us clear of hazards,” and “our location is far from stellar crowds,” reducing the “risks to Earth from gravitational tugs, gamma-ray bursts, or collapsing stars called supernovae.”¹² Truly Earth is just right for us—as though it was made for humans.

Dozens of such examples could be illustrated.¹³ In the words of famous skeptic and science writer Michael Shermer, who has a monthly column in *Scientific American*, “The design inference comes naturally. The reason people think that a Designer created the world is because it *looks* designed.”¹⁴ Agreed.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Paul Ricci (1986), *Fundamentals of Critical Thinking* (Lexington, MA: Ginn Press), p. 190.
- 2 Manuel Canales, Matthew Chwastyk, and Eve Conant (2018), “One Strange Rock: 13 Things That Make Life on Earth Possible,” *National Geographic*, 233[3]:78-87.
- 3 Ibid., p. 78.
- 4 Sten Odenwald (no date), “What Would Happen if the Rotation Axis of the Earth Changed?” *NASA Image Education Center*, <https://image.gsfc.nasa.gov/poetry/ask/q278.html>.
- 5 Sarah Fecht (2017), “What Would Happen if Earth Started to Spin Faster?” *Popular Science*, <https://www.popsci.com/earth-spin-faster>.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Victoria Roberts (2017), “Even Tiny Changes in Earth’s Orbit Would Yield Global Catastrophe,” *The New York Times*, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/24/science/earth-orbit-sun-catastrophe.html>.
- 8 David Peck Todd (1906), *A New Astronomy* (New York: American Book Company), p. 383.
- 9 “Everyday Science” (1981), *Science Digest*, 89[1]:124.
- 10 Canales, et al., p. 81; cf. J.R. Minkel (2007), “All Wet? Astronomers Claim Discovery of Earth-like Planet,” *Scientific American*, April 24, <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/all-wet-astronomers-claim/>.
- 11 Canales, et al., p. 81.
- 12 Canales, et al.
- 13 See the various “Design” topics in the “Existence of God” category on the Apologetics Press Web site—www.apologeticspress.org.
- 14 Michael Shermer (2007), *Why Darwin Matters: The Case Against Intelligent Design* (New York, NY: Henry Holt), Kindle edition, p. 65, ital. in orig.

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